

THE QUIVER

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"His only amusement was watching my little Adeline"—p. 645.

TWO STORIES IN ONE.

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CHAPTER XXIX.—MY SECOND GREAT TROUBLE (*continued*).

WHEN I recovered my senses I found myself stretched on the sofa, my mother and my maid bending over me and sprinkling my face with water, and using other restoratives to recover me from

my fainting fit, in which they gradually succeeded. At first I felt bewildered, not knowing where I was, recognising my mother, and yet unable to account for her presence. My eye then wandered round the room,

and at last fell on the letter, which was still lying on the floor, and then I remembered all. My father's Paris correspondent wrote merely to the effect that with some difficulty he had obtained intelligence of M. de Vernieul; that a strong misunderstanding had existed for some years between him and his father, but at last, finding his affairs getting into a very embarrassed condition, he had been obliged to apply to the baron for assistance. This the baron had refused to give unless his son quitted his wild, dissipated habits, and married and settled in France. M. de Vernieul had consented to do so, his debts in France were then all liquidated by the baron, and shortly afterwards he had married a young lady of considerable fortune, a Mademoiselle de Crespigny, who was then with him at one of the watering-places in the South of France, where they intended to reside for some weeks.

It would be useless to detain or distress the reader with a description of the state of mind I remained in for some weeks after the receipt of this letter. Suffice it to say I never quitted my home, but remained there in a state of melancholy apathy, my misfortune appearing almost too great for me to realise. During the time my mother frequently visited me, and did all in her power to console me, without attempting to rouse me from the morbid condition my mind was in. At length, after having given me sufficient time somewhat to recover from the shock I had received, she one morning said to me,

"Clara, my dear, you must now summon up all your courage for energetic action."

"Have you received any further intelligence, mamma?" I asked.

"None whatever, my dear. At the same time you must be aware that we cannot allow matters to rest in their present state, but for our credit's sake must deliberate what steps we ought to pursue. It would be unworthy indeed to submit tamely to an injustice of the kind."

"What steps can I take?" I inquired.

"I do not know, my dear, for up to the present moment I have consulted no one. I have heard of a somewhat similar case to yours occurring many years ago, and all I remember is that the young lady being under age at the time of her marriage, her father was the person who commenced the legal proceedings in the French court. How it ended I know not; I was totally uninterested in the matter."

"But in my case, mamma," I said, "how could papa interfere?"

"Because you were under age at the time of your marriage."

"But consider the state of his health," I said. "If he heard of my husband's behaviour—for I still maintain he is my husband in the eyes of both God and man—it might occasion him such a shock as possibly would bring on an attack of paralysis. No,

I would rather submit to any injustice than be even indirectly the cause of such a misfortune."

"But, my dear, you are not alone to be considered," said my mother. "In the first place there is the family respectability to be vindicated; but another, and, in my opinion, a far greater reason, obliges us to bring the matter under your father's notice, so that we may take legal proceedings against your husband for a restitution of conjugal rights. No, Clara, all things considered, both for your own sake and your daughter's, as well as the respectability of our family, we must bring the affair, and immediately too, under the notice of your father."

It was in vain for me to oppose these arguments of my mother, and strongly as I objected to the course, I was obliged to adopt it. I resolutely refused, however, to be a party to breaking it to my father, and my mother, to oblige me, agreed to take the painful task upon herself. That she, as well as myself, had great misgivings as to the effect it might produce on him, I am certain; but we were both, I am happy to say, in error. The intelligence seemed to have a singular effect on my father. So far from overwhelming him with sorrow, it seemed to restore to him the energy he used to possess when I was a child.

As soon as my mother had broached the subject to him she wrote to me, requesting that I would at once come with the child to Spital Square. When I entered the room in which I found my father sitting, he rose to receive me with a calmness which perfectly astonished me. He uttered not one word of reproach on my husband for his conduct, but brought forward the subject of the legal proceedings he intended to institute against him with as much coolness, energy, and clearness as if he were about commencing an action against an individual for a large sum of money in dispute between them. He told me that he had already placed the matter in the hands of Mr. Tufton, who in his turn had taken counsel's opinion on the case. The reply was that it was perfectly true a law of the kind existed in France, but that a strong feeling of reprobation was rife in the minds of all honourable Frenchmen against any abuse of the law in which a foreigner was the victim, and in which a legal marriage had taken place in accordance with the laws of the country where it had been celebrated. He believed that the fact of De Vernieul's having brought forward a forged letter to obtain the consent of the wife's parents would induce a French jury to give a verdict in her favour. My father further stated that he intended proceeding the following week to Paris, taking Mr. Tufton with him, as the receipt of the baron's letter (which unfortunately De Vernieul had retained) must be proved by evidence, and that both my mother and myself must be examined in the French courts.

Of course I had no power to offer one word of objection to the plan suggested by my father's solicitor,

painful as it naturally would be to appear in court as a witness against my husband. I now made preparations for our departure, and when complete, Mr. Tufton, my father, my mother, and myself, with my little Adeline and her nurse, all started for Paris, and Mr. Tufton having put himself in communication with the French advocate, proceedings were at once commenced against my husband. Little doubt now remained that his frequent visits to Paris were more or less connected with the re-establishment of friendly relations between himself and his father, and his marriage with Mademoiselle de Crespigny.

From the opinion of the French advocate we had engaged, it seemed more than probable we should succeed in our suit. The evidence of the forged letter, he felt, would no doubt have great weight with the jury in my favour, though at the same time the point of law appeared to be considerably involved in obscurity. For my own part, I took a more favourable view of the question. Our advocate had determined to place my husband under examination in court, and I felt persuaded, that mistaken as I had hitherto been as to his honourable character, it was impossible he could be so base as to deny the fact of his having obtained my consent to the marriage by the production of a letter purporting to contain his father's approval.

The cause was set down to be heard at Rouen, and a fortnight had yet to elapse before it would be called on. In the meantime we remained in Paris, where at first I scarcely liked to be seen abroad, lest I might meet my husband. By degrees the feeling gave way, and I visited many of the most remarkable monuments in that city, more as a matter of course than as taking the slightest interest in the various objects I saw.

The trial at last came on, and the marriage according to English law having been proved, my parents and myself were each in turn examined. My father, of course, could only prove that he had refused his consent to the marriage until that of the Baron de Vernieul had been obtained. My mother and I distinctly proved the letter containing the baron's consent being shown to us. My mother admitted that she had refused to be present at the wedding before my father's direct consent had been received, and she was then cross-examined with a view to prove that she doubted the authenticity of the letter. I again positively stated that the letter had been shown to me, as on no other condition would I have married M. de Vernieul.

It was now my husband's turn to be brought forward as a witness. With the most calm self-possession, he deliberately swore that the whole statement about the letter was false. (He had produced no such letter, he said, but on the contrary had candidly explained that it was impossible for him to obtain his father's consent to the marriage, and

with that knowledge I assented to our union). His advocate, when commenting on his client's evidence, could not deny that a sort of marriage had taken place in London, and which very possibly, taking into consideration the extreme liberality of our laws on subjects of the kind, might be valid in that country. There was no doubt, he said, that his client had been entrapped into marrying a beautiful but designing and dowerless girl, and although M. de Vernieul might have been somewhat to blame in the matter, his fault might be called an indiscretion of youth rather than a positive crime. He then went into some absurd remarks on the marriage laws of England, evidently with the intention of creating laughter and merriment among those present, so as to disturb their minds from the gravity of the point they had under consideration. He concluded by stating, amidst the merriment of many of De Vernieul's friends, that had his client been an Englishman, he would simply have put a halter about his wife's neck and taken her to Smithfield, and there sold her, according to the custom of the country, for one shilling and a pot of beer; but that M. de Vernieul being a French gentleman, and actuated by the delicacy common even to the wildest of French young men in matters of the kind, had preferred quietly leaving England, so that the affair might terminate without scandal. As it was, the young lady's family had shown the bad taste to commence proceedings, and on them must rest the disgrace they had thereby brought on themselves.

The judgment of the court was at length given. It was to the effect that by the laws of France I was not the legal wife of M. de Vernieul, and had no right to call myself by that title. For my fault in having passed by his name during my short residence in France, I was condemned to pay a fine of one franc, accompanied by the warning that I was not to repeat the offence.

CHAPTER XXX.

MY THIRD GREAT TROUBLE.

I NEED hardly say that the verdict of the court was a terrible shock to me, and yet I scarcely recognised its intensity at the moment. Possibly I was too much bewildered to feel it as acutely as I should otherwise have done. How I contrived to leave the court after its decision was given I have no idea. I have a faint remembrance of many faces glancing at me in a sympathising manner; and I think this feeling was also expressed in the countenances of the jury and the different officials of the court, and that there was a tremulousness in the tone of the judge when he gave judgment. But of all this I am not certain, and although before writing these lines, I endeavoured to call up some circumstances connected with it, I found it quite impossible; my mind on the subject is a perfect blank.

On quitting the building I remember we returned on foot to the hotel, which was but a short distance off.

Both my parents embraced me, but neither could say a word of consolation. Their sympathy, however, though mute, was at the time most eloquent. After we had remained together a short time, our advocate, who had admirably done his duty in my cause, called on us, and he expressed his sorrow at the result of the trial. My mother, prejudiced in my favour, accused the judge of partiality.

"Pardon me, madame," said our advocate, "in that respect you are in error. I can assure you, with the exception of your own family, of all who felt for you, there was none who did so more keenly than the judge himself, and the sentence he pronounced may be quoted in proof. The fine, as you are aware, is merely nominal, but he was obliged to inflict it, according to the disgraceful spirit of our laws. Do not imagine from what has to-day taken place that the opinion of the French people by any means supports the law as it now stands. Thousands of Frenchmen are married to your countrywomen, and in the strict letter of the French law I am fully persuaded nearly one half of those marriages would be considered illegal. Yet, with all the fickleness of the French character, how very rarely do they apply to the law to release them from their matrimonial contracts. Believe me, the case is a very rare one, and whatever M. de Vernieu's advocate might have said in defence of his client, he has brought on himself the contempt of every honourable-minded Frenchman."

The same day we left Rouen for Havre de Grace, and after a calm passage, we arrived at Southampton. We there began to take into consideration what steps we should adopt for the future. My father, all of whose suddenly-developed energy had now completely left him, aroused himself from his melancholy for the moment.

"My dear, I will never again return to Spital Square," he said, "except, perhaps, to die."

"Would you propose keeping on the house then?" asked my mother.

"Certainly," he said; "as long as I live no other person shall inhabit it. And now I leave all further arrangements in your hands. Beyond yourself, Clara, and her child, there is nothing on earth in which I take the slightest interest."

"And what do you say, Clara dear?" said my mother, addressing me.

"I am almost as indifferent on the subject as papa is," I replied. "I should like the house in St. John's Wood given up. As one of us must remain with papa, and you will have to go to London to arrange about the house in Spital Square, I shall ask you at the same time to see that all that belongs to me in my own house is packed up, and possession given to the landlord."

"Would you not like to superintend it yourself, my dear?" said my mother. "After I have arranged for the safe keeping of our house, I can return to your father, and you could then superintend the removal of your things yourself."

"Mamma, I will never set foot in that house again," I replied.

Before my mother could leave for London we had to determine where we would for the future reside. To fix on any settled abode we found impracticable, so we at last decided on taking a furnished house in the Isle of Wight. We had but little difficulty in finding one suitable for our family. As soon as we were settled in it my mother left us for London, and after having arranged all she had taken upon herself in the two houses, she rejoined us again.

It was some months before I was able to support my present situation with anything like equanimity, though at last I succeeded. Possibly the reader may be somewhat surprised at my so readily bending to circumstances, and I have myself some difficulty in accounting for it. One element, however, assisted powerfully in restoring my mind to the comparative peace it enjoyed—the remembrance of De Vernieu (for not only could I now submit to the idea that he was not my husband, but even hailed it with satisfaction) in the court when he gave his evidence came perpetually before me. Even the moment before he began it I confess I still loved him; when he had finished, I think I felt ashamed of myself for having ever bestowed my affections on a being so contemptible. There was not, during the time he was examined, the reluctance about him of a man who, driven by a despicable feeling of self-interest, states that which is false, and who prevaricates, or possibly breaks down under a searching cross-examination. He exhibited, on the contrary, the hard-hearted self-possession and audacity of a shameless and practised liar. During the whole time his voice never even for a moment trembled, and if there was any exception to the general matter-of-fact tone of his evidence, it was rather in a tendency to jest than otherwise. More than once he glanced at his friends in the body of the court, with as much of a smile on his countenance as he dared assume in the grave atmosphere of the place, and which was responded to by them with silent merriment.

So strong an effect had these reminiscences on me, that at last I began to feel positively ashamed of the name I bore, and should certainly have changed it for some other, had it not been for the principle which actuated me of keeping that to which I had every right, in my own country, at least.

Our life during our residence in the Isle of Wight to all appearance passed tranquilly enough. At the same time a profound sorrow was already casting its shadow over us. A misfortune which no human skill or ingenuity could avert was day by day becoming more imminent.

I have already mentioned that after my father's return to England the unusual energy he had shown during the process of our litigation gradually faded away. Both my mother and myself watched it, and we endeavoured to console ourselves with the hope that when his melancholy had arrived at the level it stood at prior to our journey to France, it would become chronic, and remain there. At first we had some reason to imagine this would be the case, but in a little time some features of an unfavourable character in my father's health began to develop themselves. We endeavoured to close our eyes to the fact, and when we found that impossible, we tried to prove to ourselves that the increasing feebleness of his mind was rather attributable to bodily ailment than to any other cause. We hoped on against hope, till at last the painful fact came prominently before us that his health and mind were both gradually sinking together.

My father's illness showed itself by the gradual fading of the mental and physical powers. He seemed to have conserved but one faculty intact—the love he bore his family. His only amusement was watching my little Adeline as she played about him. The child was also much attached to him, and his great delight was to lead her into the garden and place her on a seat by his side, or watch her gather flowers to put into his button-hole. But even this amusement at last seemed to pall on him, and he sank almost into a state of childishness, and would frequently sit for the day together without uttering a word. One subject connected with his illness I can look back on with perfect satisfaction—the indefatigable attention I paid him.

After we had remained about fifteen months in the Isle of Wight, and at the time when we considered my father's state irremediably chronic, one morning we noticed in the expression of his face an amount of intelligence to which it had been a stranger for many months. Our surprise was increased by his

saying to my mother, with perfect clearness in his tone, "My dear, I wish to leave here and return to Spital Square. Make arrangements for the journey as soon as you can."

For some moments we knew not what answer to make him, but at length my mother said, "Do you consider yourself sufficiently strong to undertake the journey? I am afraid you will find it very fatiguing."

"No, I shall be perfectly able to support it," he said, calmly; "of that you need have no fear."

In vain we begged of him not to attempt the journey till we had consulted with the medical man who attended him, but the only answer we received was that he had made up his mind to return home, and we must prepare without delay.

Although we feared the result, we had been so long accustomed to obey my father without hesitation or remonstrance, that we began the next day to make preparations to quit the Isle of Wight, and three days later we arrived safely in London, with far less inconvenience to my father than we anticipated. True, at the end of the journey he began to exhibit considerable fatigue, but as he neared the old house he revived, and when we came in sight of it his mental energies seemed perfectly recovered.

He was at once taken to his bedroom, and shortly afterwards placed in bed. There he remained for the next four-and-twenty hours without sleep, his mind evidently dwelling on bygone days and associations. He then rapidly sank into his former state, this time without recovery, and he died three days after his return to London.

Somewhat against the ordinary custom in that day, my mother and myself attended his funeral; in fact, we were the only mourners. We remained beside his grave till it was filled in, and then returned to our desolate home in Spital Square.

(To be continued.)

THE WOMEN'S "IDLE TALES."

"Their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not."—Luke xxiv. 11.



NE need not dwell upon the fact of the extreme and vital importance to us all that we should duly take home to our hearts every jot and tittle we can possibly gather from Holy Scripture on the subject of the risen Saviour. It is not meant—or, not only—that we should settle our faith firmly on that which we know to be the cardinal point of our religion, and in which we express our assent every time we confess our faith. Not only so; but as we see it to be at once our privilege and our duty to study and appropriate every circumstance in the life of

Christ, making it, as far as may be, our pattern in all the changing scenes of our own lives—their troubles and their joys—so we should also carefully and minutely study the death, resurrection, and final ascension of our Saviour, as being so surely the type of our own death, resurrection, and final ascension, as his life *ought* to be the type of our own. People do not always look at the matter thus. They call the study of Christ's life and ministry before his crucifixion *practical*, but they set down the examination of his life during the forty days between the resurrection and ascension as *speculative*. Why so? Is there need

to draw *any* line between the two? And if so, is not the latter almost the *more* worthy our attention, not only from its intrinsic importance, but from the fact of its being less fully revealed and known? What did that loving lingering of the Lord Jesus around the familiar scenes of his earlier history for forty days mean? Had it not a meaning and a purpose, think we, as plain as the resurrection itself? Shall we not rather say a serious duty lies upon us to study these matters? Ought we not reverently to gather all that is revealed to us of the future that awaits us? And is not the privilege of doing so as patent as the duty, since St. Paul says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable?" Miserable indeed would it have been had all that pathetic story ended on Calvary; as miserable as when some broken life of ours goes down unfinished to the grave, or which *would* be broken if we did not know that the sequel lay beyond. It is that sequel of Christ's life we propose to study in a brief series of papers. Though our studies will be all detached and separate ones, still there will be a continuous vein of thought running through them.

Now, in looking at these appearances of the Saviour after his resurrection, we may put aside at once two classes of questions which are hedged about with difficulty, and which really are of no other than a critical import—namely, the chronological question as to how often and when Christ appeared; and also the geographical or topographical one of where he appeared—in Judea or Galilee. What far more concerns us is what we may call the *moral* question—to *what sort of people* he appeared? what was the connecting link between Christ and those who saw him? what were the special qualifications, that is, which enabled men and women like ourselves to realise this great fact, to *see* the risen Saviour, some earlier, some later? And here you will discover at once an order and gradation in the appearances which show that they were not isolated facts, without any connection—they formed a chain, not a mere accumulation—one with another, and as orderly a development of a law of God as were the circles of the earthly ministry, though not perhaps at first sight so palpable or so easy to trace.

The words of the text form the comment, not of any who were outside the circle of Christ's blessed influences, but of the apostles themselves on the story of the holy women, to whom Christ first of all manifested himself after his resurrection. There is considerable doubt as to the movements of these women; there is some confusion as to their names; and these are the questions into which it was said we would not go, except of sheer necessity; but this is certain, that *it was to women first of all* Christ appeared. The chief of penitents, Mary Magda-

lene, was—as one has well said—"the first mortal preacher of the resurrection;" so much so that modern infidelity sets it down as the figment of her brain, making her wish the father of the thought. Then the other women too. They had been the last to leave the cross; they were the first to watch at the sepulchre. So they became the first witnesses of the resurrection.

Now, let us beware of two errors at this point. First, of supposing that this was a matter of sex; it was one of temperament and character, not of sex only. Secondly, let us not make too much of the fact that the women saw Christ a few hours earlier than the men. It deserves notice, but must not be pressed unduly, or made to mean more than it does mean.

There was one—the truest, holiest woman of all who did *not*, as far as we know, go to his grave at all—his earthly mother, Mary of Nazareth. We may well believe her faith was too firm to require any corroboration. She *knew* she should not find him there. The other devoted ones had to learn the fact. Yes, she knew it, wherever she was in retirement with her new son. She had not pondered His words all His life, as some of them had listened to them for three years, to forget them at the first crisis. It seems strange He did not come to her first; stranger still we hear of no meeting at all between that mother and that Son. Such may have taken place, and the details be too deep for us to learn here; we may learn hereafter in the fuller gospel of Paradise. Or perhaps they did *not* meet. Perhaps her faith was *so* full and *so* strong that she did not need it. Perhaps she was even still exceptional in her blessedness among women. Perhaps their not meeting was a new illustration of the old truth that discipleship—spiritual likeness and kindred—transcended mere earthly kinship.

It was said that this was a question of character, not of sex. We have another striking proof of this when Peter and John ran to the sepulchre; though St. John arrived there first, he stooped and looked, but went not in. Peter went in and examined everything critically. He had what we should now call "a thorough investigation" as to the truth of these "idle tales."

Now here, surely, is an index of the law at work in reference to Christ's appearances. Women were the first to look for him, to remember his words. To them the angel announced the resurrection, and they appear to have gone at once to the apostles—Mary Magdalene to the new home to tell John and Peter, the others to the rest of the reunited apostolate, assembled after their craven flight. The majority simply disbelieved. The women had not seen him—had only noted the absence of the sacred body from the tomb. Even Peter and John returned to their own homes

after examining the sepulchre. Mary Magdalene waited; the other women returned. Mary Magdalene saw him first; the other women saw him next.

This, stripped of all difficulties, is the concise narrative of the first appearance of Christ. Now what was the moral difference of those who saw him first from those who saw him later? Just this: with the men it was all matter of *evidence*; with the women matter of *faith*.

There is a class of mind that receives high truth of this nature, as it were, by intuition; there is another class that can only accept it at all as the conclusion of an argument. It is perhaps not competent for us to say that one class of mind is superior to the other—each is what God made it; but it certainly is allowable for us to say that those who accept in pure faith are the earliest recipients of Divine truths. It must be so in the nature of things. One set of people have to argue the matter out logically; the others at once accept it.

St. Peter had to go into the tomb and examine every detail. St. John saw at a glance what had happened—the Beloved was not there. He does not seem to have realised all the truth; but he went home to his new mother with that half truth at all events, Jesus is not in his grave. *She* knew why he was not: perhaps she told St. John.

Now, it is customary to speak of the cast of mind which we attribute to St. John as womanly. The world adds weak; the world has no more contemptuous word to speak of a man than to call him effeminate; and as far as collecting evidence, and conducting investigation goes, and drawing conclusions from such premises, there is no doubt that the womanly character is at a disadvantage, or a seeming disadvantage. Seeming disadvantage we say, for we often find that they have jumped to the very conclusion to which the hard-headed logicians have so laboriously struggled.

Speak to these illogical people (as they are termed) of such things as now occupy our attention—the nature of the resurrection-body; the identity of the surviving self; the permanence of affection; the reunion of the parted; and they will say—not, "I believe these things"—but, "I *know* them." They do, in their simple faith, grasp the great truths of God earlier than those who reason them out. That, surely, is the fact attested by women being the first to see the risen Saviour.

But it may be said, with some show of reason, "My temperament, my cast of mind, my power of accepting great truths instinctively, is as much out of my power as whether I was born a man or a woman." Perhaps so; but still this can be said: Keep your man's character—whatever your sex may be—for the things of this world. It will help you to buy and sell, and get gain; it may, in

these days, help to equalise those of the so-called "weaker," with what has perhaps been too much regarded as the stronger sex. But draw the line rigidly; do not carry this spirit unduly into matters of simple faith. Remember how even apostles set down as women's "idle tales" what they afterwards had to confess God's greatest truth—a truth many of them, most of them, laid down their lives for. There are a hundred matters in daily life where you have to take something for granted. Naturally this will be more frequently the case when you pass from things of this world to things of the next. It is, in point of fact, inconsistent even for the pure theist—who only believes in a personal God—to set down the faith of the most advanced believer as an "idle tale." He cannot *prove* the personality of God which he believes; he must take that on trust. The difference between himself and the most advanced believer is one of degree, not of kind. Nay, it may be asserted that *all* elaborate argument, all reasoned conclusions about these matters of revelation, amount more or less to a begging the question. Your conclusion can only be as your premises, and these must always involve a large acceptance of testimony. This, at all events, will be certain: your own blessedness will depend greatly on this womanly element—if you still choose to call it so—in your character. Christ did not upbraid St. Thomas; but he said those were more "blessed" who believed without seeing.

Very great, very persuasive, a mighty instance of the power of the Gospel to subdue the strongest things in nature, is the scholar's reasoned creed; but few of us know the agonies of the process gone through in reasoning it out. How few of us have the power so to reason it! What a temptation there is in these days to say, "I will not believe, except so-and-so be granted me." There is a real agony in such suspense. Supposing the concession never to be made. Then we must die, as well as live, unbelieving. Is there any privilege, any blessedness in this? We may think so now, when the false glitter of talent and reputation for wisdom dazzles us, and a kind of halo seems to surround the intellectual sceptic; but there will come for all of us a time of trial, such as came on those people who surrounded Christ. They were not hardened sceptics—not men who doubted for the sake of doubting; they were his best and closest friends, and yet they set down as "idle tales" the very best news that could possibly have met their ears, the mere fulfilment of His own promises. Do you not think Peter and John, as they went dejectedly back to their desolate homes, *wished* they could believe those "idle tales?" So there will come a time when the false glare fades out from worldly reputation—when we no longer care about being thought wise, or clever, or

sharp-witted, and when we shall pray God, not even as Solomon did, for wisdom, but pray as for the most priceless possession, "Give me, O God, a simple woman's faith in thee!"

Closely as they are blended, there are times when our earthly and heavenly citizenship have to energeise separately. Our faith in God carried out into worldly matters, may perhaps sometimes result in credulity; though not nearly as often as we imagine, since our faith in God is no blind trust. But to carry our worldly doubt up into heavenly things is simply fatal. Those bearded men may legitimately have discredited as "idle tales" the women's information on matters connected with their worldly callings—with their ventures on the lake, their labours in vineyard or olive-garden, or their receipt of custom; but they were over-wise, unduly cautious, when they questioned a woman's unreasoning faith in God's goodness, and Christ's fulfilment of his promise.

There can be no sterner rebuke to science falsely so called, to human arguments coming into collision with God's revelations, than the fact commemorated in our text, how good and true followers of Jesus Christ set down as women's "idle tales" the grandest truth God ever endorsed upon earth—"the Lord Jesus is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept!"

Perhaps there is no fitter comment on the subject than to quote the words—exquisite though sad—of a doubter in these "idle tales:"—

"It is the one sad gospel that is true—
Christ is not risen!

Weep not beside the tomb,

Ye women, unto whom

He was great solace while ye tended Him;

Ye who with napkin o'er the head,

And folds of linen round each wounded limb,

Laid out the Sacred Dead;

And thou who barest Him in thy wondering womb.

Ye daughters of Jerusalem, depart,

Bind up, as best ye may, your own sad bleeding heart!"

THE GORSE.

INNÆUS, from his Northern clime,
Came, in our Spring's exciting prime,
To England's milder air;
And, as with buoyant step he trod
Her wide-spread downs' elastic sod,
He saw a sight so fair
That on his knees he thanked the Lord for giving
Such glory to the earth and to the living.

The sight that moved the pious Swede
To grateful thought and holy deed
Was yellow gorse in bloom;
A flower whose golden wealth appears

Guarded by ranks of bristling spears

In Nature's treasure-room;

And kindles barren places with a glory,

Like sunrise on the tops of mountains hoary.

Flower of the hill-side and the heath,

Whose gilded bloom and perfumed breath

As sun and air are free;

I, too, would raise my thankful voice

And bid mankind with me rejoice

For common gifts like thee;

Content to dwell in all thy hoarded beauty,

Amid the rugged ways of sternest duty.

ANNE BEALE.

THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ABOUT NELLIE," "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER II.

FREDERIC and Henry Dawson seldom troubled each other with letters; they had little in common between them, and the latter was too stingy both of time and postage-stamps to waste them on what he considered would probably be a profitless correspondence. When Jack, however, was about nine years of age, and after nearly five years of silence, the solicitor was agreeably surprised on going down to his office one morning, to find a letter from his brother. It contained the surprising news that he wished Jack to be well educated, as having no children of his own he intended eventually to do something for him; and a request that his brother would send him at

once to a good school, towards which expense he was willing to contribute fifty pounds a year.

That letter took Henry Dawson completely by surprise; it was a pleasant reflection for him all through the day, and for once there was a shade of selfishness in his pleasure. He was scrupulous in keeping everything from his family as a rule; he never told them little incidents of his professional life, nor listened with interest to any domestic details which, if encouraged, they would only have been too glad to relate; he was not congenial, but for once he thought he must take them into his confidence, and he was anxious, from almost kindly feelings, that evening to return to them. He always walked home, it was a saving; moreover, he liked the exercise, and the



(Drawn by J. D. WATSON.)

"He saw a sight so fair
That on his knees he thanked the Lord for giving
Such glory to the earth and to the living"—p. 648.

quiet hour and a half it took him to get from the City to Kensington gave him time to think over his plans for the morrow, and arrange his ideas. He was never hurried, for he had no anxious cook at home, fearful lest her master's lateness should dim the glories of the dinner-table. He dined frugally in the City in the middle of the day—calling it lunch—while his household dined still more frugally at the same hour at home, and a shabby tea-table at seven o'clock (a repast which was followed by no cosy little supper) was the only gastronomic entertainment which by courtesy required his presence of an evening. He walked quickly down Oxford Street, then inside the park railings till he reached Kensington Gardens. It was a lovely night—a clear, mild October evening, with the moonlight glinting through the dark trees, heavy with dew, which had just a touch of frost in it, and with the stars peering pitifully through the branches at the leaves which were fast strewing the pathway. Henry Dawson had no love of stars or trees or deepening shadows, but he walked inside the park railings because it was quieter, and he wanted to think again over that unexpected letter from his brother.

"I am very glad about Jack," he said; "his mother and Polly will be satisfied now. They always said I would do nothing for him, and they were right." He stopped, for a thought suddenly came across him, "Why should they know it? It will only give them an excellent excuse to be more extravagant than they are already if they know I spend nothing on the boy. Fred meant it for a benefit to me as well as for Jack, and why should he be taught to consider his uncle more generous than his father?" Then he walked quickly on, without once stopping till he reached his own street door, when, by the aid of a latch key, he let himself quietly into the unlighted hall. He was a cat-like man in some things—moving softly, seeing quickly, and hiding his ugly nature under his blandness, as that animal hides its claw behind its fur.

Jack and Polly were sitting by the dining-room fire, and the first words their father heard decided him fully how to act, if he had had any lingering doubt concerning his brother's letter.

"I thought I heard father," the boy said, discontentedly; "didn't you?"

"No," answered Polly, "it was only Jane taking candles into the study, to be lighted when he comes."

"I'm so glad. Go on, Polly, 'and then the Beast turned into a prince again.'"

"A prince again," continued Polly, "'and married Beauty, and they lived happy ever after.'"

"Oh! is that all? I say, Polly, wouldn't you like to have been the Beast?"

"Yes," replied his sister, "pretty well; but I think I would rather have been Beauty."

Then Mr. Dawson made himself heard, and Polly lighted one burner of the massive gas chandelier, which, as she often inwardly remarked, looked bald

from want of regilding, and established herself at the head of the tea-table.

"Jack," said his father, presently, "you look pale; are you ill?"

"Maria wrote to day," put in Mrs. Dawson, "and she says she told Dr. Gibbs about Jack, and he says he ought to have plenty of strengthening things."

"Oh, nonsense, Mary! those country quacks are like so many old women. Jack!" he continued, with a wonderful impulse of generosity, "jump up, and I'll give you a shilling for marbles."

Jack raised himself, and looked at his father doubtfully. Polly opened her eyes very wide, made her mouth very round, and exclaimed, "Oh! oh, Jack!"

"No, no," he went on, nervously, "you don't care for marbles; you are too big a boy, too much of a man for such things, are you not, Jack? But I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll send you to school."

"Will you really, Henry?" and Mrs. Dawson started up, while Polly exclaimed again, "Oh, Jack! Jack, darling!"

"And will you let it be a good school?" Mrs. Dawson asked, still unbelieving.

"Yes, of course; I like to do things well. I will spend fifty pounds a year on him—"

"Fifty pounds!" They thought he was mad. It seemed to them a magnificent sum, only to be dreamt of in dreams and spoken of in whispers.

"Or less," he said hastily, his nature triumphing over his honesty.

"Mr. Dale, the clergyman, takes pupils," Polly said; "such nice boys, all the sons of gentlemen, and he only charges twelve guineas a term, three terms in a year—that's less than fifty pounds."

"Yes, I should like him to go there," echoed Mrs. Dawson. "He only takes six boys, all the sons of gentlemen."

It seemed to her that sending the boy to the curate with the six sons of gentlemen, was a more dignified proceeding than sending him to an ordinary school.

"He shall go there, my dear," the lawyer said, in his blandest tone. Then he retired to his study, and pulled out his brother's letter, and read it again. That letter was an anxiety to him. It ran thus:—

"I dare say you will be surprised to hear from me, but I have one or two things I wish to tell you. As you know, my wife died some four years since, and shortly afterwards one only child. The double sorrow has made me an old man already, and will I hope shortly be an excuse for my retiring from my post. I am not a rich man, but I am thankful to say I am not a very poor one, for besides my pay here I have made something in other ways. I am certainly not a strong one, and I have been considering lately what I shall do with my little wealth in the event of death overtaking me. I shall not tell you of my intentions further than that I do not intend to enrich you personally, but I have thought a good deal of your boy

since I lost my own, and if he turns out well I shall help to provide for him." Then followed the arrangement for Jack's education.

"Arranging this is not the only object of my letter," he continued; "I have had few friends in life, but the one I prized most among them was poor Bob Welch. When he died, before I left England, I promised I would look after his lad (the mother died soon after his birth), and this I have endeavoured to do. He has been living with an aunt and uncle at Liverpool, and is now a young man of two or three and twenty. He had a fancy for a mercantile life, and obtained a situation in an office at Liverpool; but as it was not likely to lead to anything better, I wrote to the head of a well-known firm with whom I had formerly some acquaintance, asking him if he could find room for the lad, and intimating that matters would be smoothed financially towards his working his way up to a responsible position. I intend doing something for him myself; and his mother's relations are well to do, and have no children of their own. My friend replied by saying they had a vacant desk in their branch house in London, and this they offered young Welch. I do not wish him, being utterly friendless in the great metropolis, to fall into harm's way, and shall be glad if you would make it a point to look after him; ask him to your house, and see he takes up his abode in some respectable family, who will not think it a part of their duty to swindle him. I know your careful habits, but in carrying out this wish of mine you shall not incur any pecuniary loss. I have directed him to call upon you, and hope to hear soon that he is on friendly terms with your family.

"I have written you so long a letter that I shall almost expect you to send me in a lawyer's bill for reading it."

"Too bad of Frederic to judge me so harshly," the lawyer said to himself; "too bad of him," he added, not angrily but mildly, rubbing his hands as he made his observations. He was never unmannerly, even mentally; he generally gained his ends, but whether he did or not, in every phase of his life he preserved his suavity. His very feelings were blandly civil to each other, and he never had a second thought that did not treat the first with politeness. "Too bad of Frederic; he's a good fellow though, and as impulsive as ever. We were both of us always impulsive, that was our fault. I had no idea that he made anything beyond his pay," he continued. "Yes, I'll carry out his wish about young Welch, or he may usurp Jack's right. People ought to consider that what they have belongs to their family, and not spend their money beyond it; I never do on principle," forgetting that he never spent any even in it if he could possibly help it, and believing in his own words. Some people are apt to be dreadful hypocrites towards themselves.

One evening when Jack had been about a month at Mr. Dale's, Mr. Dawson made a second communication to his family. "A gentleman will call here to-morrow evening," he said, addressing his wife; "I wish you to be polite to him, and—and perhaps you had better ask him to have a cup of tea."

"Is he young or old?" asked Polly.

"Young; he is a sort of *protégé* of my brother's, who has asked me to look after him, for he has only just come from Liverpool. If I fail to do so he may get into all sorts of debt and bad habits, and call upon my brother to assist him; so that I consider it almost a duty to carry out his request." Mr. Dawson was getting communicative; they were quite astonished.

"Hadh't we better get something nice for tea?" inquired Mrs. Dawson, with a hazy vision of smoking muffins and "something relishing," as she expressed it, before her eyes.

"No, certainly not," Mr. Dawson answered; "it is wrong to give a young man a taste for luxuries and ideas of extravagance in any way. I should feel that I failed to carry out my brother's wishes if I did so. The most beautiful element in life, my dear, is simplicity." Mr. Dawson was fond of ending his remarks with little moral tags, especially when the morality favoured his own views. "I was thinking," he went on presently, "that we so seldom use the drawing-rooms, and that as Fred is anxious I should look after young Welch, it would not be a bad idea if we allowed him to have them and reside here."

"Wouldn't it be wearing out the furniture for nothing at all?" asked Polly, who considered quickly that any one living in the house would find out in what very old slippers and shabby dresses she was compelled to array herself in the morning: women always mentally see so far.

"Let him live here for nothing!" Mrs. Dawson exclaimed.

"No," her husband replied meekly, "not for nothing; that would be a false kindness. But we really do not want those rooms, and he might as well pay me—us I mean—as any one else. Do not poke up the fire, Mary, I have told you of that so often; always pat it down, the heat is then concentrated and sent out in greater force, and poking it up makes the coals flare uselessly away—remember that, and pat it down. You see I have a great many expenses now; sending Jack to school costs a good deal, so it would really be a help."

"But a lodger," Polly began, deprecatingly.

"I should not like it at all, Henry," Mrs. Dawson said uneasily. "Only think if it ever got down to Benthwaite; besides, what would Mrs. Albury say? I should be so ashamed not to ask her up in the drawing-room if she called."

"How is it possible for any one to hear of it at Benthwaite?" her husband asked severely. "You

are much too ready in your remarks, Polly. He would not be a lodger. You could say he was a ward of your uncle's, and resided with us; that would be the truth."

"Or the fiction would be a pleasant one, at all events," Polly said, stroking her beads and thinking, "I wonder what he will think of *me*?" Girls are always inwardly egotistical.

"As for the Alburys," he continued, "they need not know it, for we could always have the use of the drawing-room when we required it."

"So we could," Mrs. Dawson answered, feeling like the everlastingly-quoted man, who being too obstinate to give in gracefully, is convinced against

his will, and remains of the same opinion. "I can't bear that Mrs. Albury, she always seems to think herself somebody; they have everything in such style, you see."

Mrs. Albury was the wife of Mr. Dawson's partner, and they (the Alburys) were slightly purse-proud people, who lived quite up to their means, and as almost a natural consequence Mrs. Albury was a little patronising, and Mrs. Dawson a little envious. Once a year they exchanged civilities; the Dawsons dined with the Alburys, and Mrs. Dawson left feeling spiteful; and the Alburys dined with the Dawsons, and Mrs. Albury left feeling contemptuous.

(To be continued.)

A WORD UPON HAVING IT OUT.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

I DO not mean a tooth; that is to say, I do not intend writing an article upon quite so painful a subject. Perhaps, however, we shall get to the heart of the subject at once by this suggestion; for I do certainly desire to suggest when an unpleasant thing is to be done, it is better to do it at once. Bravely to meet a difficulty is a thousand times better than dilly-dallying about until we are in for an agony of continuation. We all remember John Leech's picture of the little gentleman taken in tow by a kind aunt, who has come in sight of the dentist's, and is about to face the operation, when two inconsiderate and vulgar street boys make their appearance. The first says, "Oh crikey! if here aint a chap goin' to have a grinder out! My eye, what fangs!" The second says, "Oh, I wouldn't be 'im! Won't there be a ser-e-w-a-u-n-c-h neither!" At which all the coaxing and persuasion, which had led Master Tom up to the tooth-extracting point, loses its influence, and Master Tom relapses into an obstinate state. There he stands, his aunt inside the dentist's doorway, and he, held tightly by the hand, is pulling away dejectedly but vigorously. Those inconsiderate street boys have probably prolonged his pain by preventing him having it out.

Now there are many things to have out besides teeth, and in a moral sense there is as much pain about the operation; but that it is best in the long run, all history and experience abundantly prove. When a man is getting into pecuniary difficulties, when the balance begins to be on the wrong side of his ledger, when an awkward consciousness fills the mind that the business is beginning a sort of drive down hill, every sensible and honourable man knows that, not only is it best for creditor A

and creditor B to know the state of things immediately, but that it is best for himself, the driver of the said concern, to rein in the trade horses at once, to put the drag on, and let men know the exact position of affairs. Such a man is hardly ever dealt with inconsiderately or unkindly by those to whom he is indebted. There has been manifested a soul of honour in him, and this will be met by the soul of honour in them. He has been brave to speak out at once; he has endeavoured to protect his own character and to save his creditor's estate; and 'tis ten to one that by "having it out" at once he will clear away difficulties, conciliate his connections, renew his credit, and commence again with a clear conscience and a confiding circle of commercial friends. Whereas, in such a case, if dilatoriness and cowardice prevent him from adopting the course I have suggested, he goes from worse to worse, gets worried, pale, and sleepless, does harm to himself and injures every one about him. Step by step his difficulties increase: what was misfortune at first soon merges into fault; he is tempted to adopt illicit means for propping up his credit and staving off the evil day; and he ends, not only in bankruptcy as far as cash is concerned, but in bankruptcy of character too. Depend upon it, that the courageous and correct thing to do is to bear the first discomfort in a manly way, and to "have it out" at once.

By this time we shall see that teeth are not the only things that need courage to have them out; and perhaps the most patent case in which the motto should be applied is that of misunderstandings and quarrels. I believe that servants are often blamed for keeping so little hot water ready for use, and sometimes letting boilers that are not self-filling dry up; I believe they are also blamed for keeping kettles on till all the water has been boiled into steam, and disposed of itself

up the chimney. Exactly; but then there is this fact before us, that hot water does in time steam clean away. What I wish to notice is this, that in cases of misunderstanding, the hot water of the heart keeps fizzing and steaming for weeks and months and sometimes years. Ladies give one another what Longfellow calls "mutilated curtsies," and gentlemen look over a kind of military collar at one another for elaborate periods of time, in consequence of some slight or awkwardness or blunder of some sort or other, which if, when next they met, they had had the courage to have it fairly out, would have passed away as quickly as the clouds that passed over the heavens that selfsame day. But as this requires effort and pluck, and requires some one to speak first, it very often happens that coldness and even rudeness succeed the warmth and courtesy which characterised their former relationship. The consequence is that being necessarily often brought together in the circles of business or local duties or family friendship, there is always manifest a latent sense of disharmony on either side; and in the ledger of life, there is a great loss under the peace of mind and pleasure account. Now I am writing about what everybody knows to be true, when I say that one misunderstanding gives place to others. I heard recently a lecture on the harvest of the North Sea, in a certain philosophical society, which was full of interest, but which made it evident to me that it is the duty of the public generally to eat herrings; for a scientific computation was made—how there would be no sea at all to speak of, but a mass of seething herrings, if all the herring spawn was hatched. We should literally bathe in herrings; the Channel difficulty would soon be solved, for some enterprising contractor would lay down pontoons on herrings, and by-and-by there would be

Herrings, herrings everywhere,
And not enough to drink.

Well now, let this be as it may, but being remarkably fond of sea bathing, however, I must confess my great indebtedness to the herring fisheries. If herrings are so prolific, I do not hesitate to say misunderstandings are; and that in the course of two or three years they, at all events, are so herring-like, that you have a very large progeny of them.

I need scarcely say that the words "having it out" may be taken in a wrong sense. Certainly, when schoolboys use them in a pugilistic sense, they have not much to defend them. Who amongst us does not remember the corner in the old schoolyard or the cricket-field where we

ourselves have had it out, and have taken a considerable amount of interest in other boys having it out? Even then, however, the worst boys were not always such as these, but the sneaking sort—the big bullies—who never fought bravely, but who took pleasure in surreptitiously pinning little fellows' ears to the walls, and rubbing them till they were all of a tingle, when no one could see their vindictiveness. It is not, however, in the fighting sense of having it out that I plead for the operation at all, for settling it with fists or swords does not really finish the business; hearts may still rankle when the contest is over and done. I certainly need not say that the spirit of genuine Christianity is against all this sort of thing, and that it enjoins us to agree with an adversary *quickly* while he is in the way, and not to let the sun go down upon our wrath. Also, how many may be taken away for ever by death while we are still at enmity or variance with them; and how often we wish, when the place that knew them once knows them no more, that we had frankly told them all, and so were free from those memories of alienation, which are never so bitter as when the quiet grave has hidden them for ever from our sight. We can then remember opportunities gone for aye, which we might have made use of to remove all misconception and to renew the hearty love of the days of old. Next, then, to the misery of having misunderstandings at all, is the misery of perpetuating them by a policy of persistent silence. Let us awaken the spirit of Christian manliness and womanliness, and determine that none of these fierce fires of enmity shall burn in our bosoms, but that face to face, and heart to heart, we will on the next occasion brave the matter out at once. There are, as I have suggested, worse things in the world than toothache. I do not mean in a physical sense; for though some people talk about "only a toothache," I do not think that any pain can be very much worse than that, unless it be vivisection, which for men and animals is cruel agony indeed. I use the words in this paper in a moral sense, and I am sure that the Saviour whom we love and whose spirit we desire to have reigning in our hearts, has taught us, in the song which heralded the Gospel itself, that the greatest earthly blessing is goodwill to men. We cannot have this goodwill whilst secret misunderstandings are gnawing away at our hearts; and in all disputes, squabbles, slights, quarrels, wrongs, I can only close this paper, as I commenced it, by suggesting that the best of all courses of treatment is at once, in regard to each of them, to HAVE IT OUT.

FATHER'S LETTER.

CHAPTER I.



NE could hardly tell it was a summer's day at Walbridge, so very wet and windy was it, so cold and dull. The sandy beach, generally so gay with bright groups scattered over it, and made lively with the merry tunes of musicians, was quite forsaken now, except for a few weather-beaten boatmen loitering here and there, as if tempest or rain had nothing to say to them.

Not quite forsaken though, for see! there is something which looks like a little bundle of fluttering black clothes struggling against the wind, the only wonder being that it is not quite lifted up by it and carried away. But no, it has battled its way successfully, till at last it turns up from the open beach into the comparative safety of the High Street. It has stopped before the post-office, and now it has crept inside, a pale, sad, but very sweet little face peeping out of the bundle.

Mr. Johnstone, the head clerk, was busily engaged poring over figures and book-keeping behind the high counter, a great deal too busy to notice the poor little girl who was trying her best to attract his notice, and who, as she approached the high counter which hid her completely from view, asked timidly, "Please, sir, will you give me my letter?" and then, getting no answer, she repeated her question again and again, each time more mournfully as she saw no prospect of being attended to.

At last a bright idea struck her. When she had been in the post-office before, she had seen many people come in and put down money, and then that great man with the brown beard, or some of the other clerks, had at once spoken to them; and she thought perhaps it was because she had put down no money that they did not answer her. She knew she had in her pocket one penny—a very precious penny, which she had been saving up all day to put with a few others she had at home, for a particular purpose, but she now gladly drew it out, quite sure that Mr. Johnstone would be as glad to have it as she was.

There was some difficulty about getting it across the wide counter, but the wise little woman, after one or two unsuccessful efforts, managed by standing up on tip-toe to reach high enough to roll the penny right across to the other side.

She pushed it too with such good effect that Mr. Johnstone was startled by finding it roll on to the paper on which he was engaged, and without having an idea as to where it came from. He started up rather annoyed, for it had blotted and confused the figures he was adding up, and looking round wonderingly to see where it could have come from, he was still more startled by hearing a timid little voice below the counter say, "It was me sent it, sir."

The child could not have desired more attention than she got then, for the great man peeped over, and asked the little black dripping figure what she wanted.

"If you please, sir, I want my letter," she asked again.

In spite of his vexation at the blotted figures, Mr. Johnstone could not help laughing as he said, "How am I to know which is your letter, little one?"

"My letter is from father, sir, and you'll know it because his name is William Carter."

"Well, let's see," Mr. Johnstone said, good-naturedly, as he turned over a packet of letters beside him, "your father's name is Carter; and who did he write to; to you?"

"Oh no, sir; to mother, but mother's dead, and she told me to be sure to come for the letter this very day—just two Fridays after she died."

The great man paused for a minute to glance at the little black-robed thing with the sad face, and then muttered to himself, "Poor child," as with more interest he continued his search, and he looked almost as disappointed as she did, when he came to the end of the packet without finding any letter bearing the name of Carter.

"Stop a minute," he said, taking up another bundle, "we'll have a look here," as he carefully turned over each letter and looked at its address; but he had got very near the end and as the poor child watched him eagerly, her face grew still more sad, and the corners of her mouth twitched nervously, as she tried to hide her disappointment.

But suddenly it lighted up, and the bright colour rushed to her cheeks, as she held out her hands and cried imploringly, "Oh! give it to me—oh! please give it to me."

Mr. Johnstone looked quite pleased too, as to be quite sure, he again read the half-illegible address on the envelope he had drawn out, and then handed it to her with a smile.

She took a little handkerchief, almost the only dry thing about her, and wrapping it round and round the precious letter, put it back in her pocket, holding it tight there in her hand, as a vision of pickpockets rose up before her mind, making her wish she was safe at home with her treasure.

"Thank you, sir," she said, curtseying, as she turned to leave the room, her eyes shining forth her gratitude even more than her words.

"You have forgotten something, little one," Mr. Johnstone said, taking up the penny from the blurred and disfigured paper, and holding it down to her. He was greatly surprised, however, when she quickly refused it, the bright flush coming back to her face, and her eyes cast down, as she said, "That

was to pay you, sir, for listening to me. I have no more, or I would give it to you."

"My poor child, have you always to pay people for listening to you?" Mr. Johnstone asked as he gazed at the little speaker, quite puzzled what to make of her.

"Mother used to listen to me;" and the quivering came round the sensitive little mouth again; "and so used father. Aunt does sometimes, but not always."

"And where has father gone, little one?"

"Oh, to a big place, far—far away. He said he would send money for mother and me to come out to him when he had made enough. Does it take long, sir," she added, timidly looking up at the great man, "to make money out there?"

Mr. Johnstone had come from behind the counter and was standing close to her now, feeling her wet dress, and looking down compassionately at the slight little thing.

"Poor child," he said again; "and how are you thinking of getting out there to father, now your mother is dead?"

"Oh, father knows," she said confidently; "he promised to write and tell us what to do," and she squeezed the letter she held tighter in her hand.

"And how long has he been away, little one?"

"Oh, a long time, sir, but mother always knew when his letters were coming. I can't think how she knew," the child continued, shaking her head thoughtfully; "I think she must have dreamt about them."

Mr. Johnstone thought it much more likely that she knew when the mails were due, and that her husband was a punctual writer; but he only said, while he smiled kindly down at the child, "Well, has your father made any money yet in that far-off place?"

"Oh yes, sir; but not enough to take us out yet."

A few more questions brought out all the little one's story; how her father had gone to New Zealand to join his brother, who with his family had been out there already a long time, and with whom he was to make his home till he had made money enough to send for his wife and child to go out to him.

She told him how, more than a year before, she and her mother had stood at the railway-station clinging round William Carter, bidding him a sorrowful good-bye; and how, as he embraced them again and again, he begged them to be cheerful and keep up heart, for he hoped before long, in a new country, to make lots of money, and send for them to join him, and then they would all be happier and richer than they had ever been before. She told him also how they had remained watching till the cruel train which carried him off to Liverpool had quite disap-

peared, and they could no longer see the red handkerchief waving the last good-bye from the window of one of the carriages.

How since then they had struggled on, earning what they were able, till, after a long time, as it seemed to little Allie, a letter had come all the way across the sea, raising up their hearts and making their work and their waiting seem lighter, and soon after that, another came, containing not only bright words of love and cheerfulness, but money—money, which had been hard earned and lovingly toiled for in New Zealand, for the little household at home.

Just as Allie said, her mother always knew when to expect "father's letters," and was at the post-office almost as soon as the large packets and bundles of letters arrived, waiting patiently there, till they were sorted, and she could claim her much-wished-for treasure.

Each time, her father spoke of the longed-for reunion; but the weary months had passed, bringing the time apparently closer, but bringing also a very dark shadow down upon the little family, crushing it beneath its weight, and blotting out the fair picture of the happy family meeting, which had been gradually shining out brighter and clearer as it grew closer.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

248. Quote the two passages in which Christ's resurrection is ascribed to his own innate power.

249. Subsequent to the appointment of Andrew to the apostleship, he is mentioned only *three* times in the New Testament. Give the occasions.

250. Give, in St. Paul's words, the character of Ananias, by whom he was baptised at Damascus.

251. Where do we read of the Gibeonites for the last time in Scripture?

252. We have two remarkable proofs of the sovereignty of Christ over the winds and the waves. Give them.

253. Give the instances after his resurrection when Christ was not known to those to whom he appeared.

254. In the common acceptance of the word, give the oldest example of a riddle in the Bible.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 623.

238. Zaccheus (Luke xix. 5).

239. Neh. viii. 17.

240. Entire prostration (Numb. xvi. 22; Josh. v. 14); kneeling (2 Chron. vi. 13); standing (1 Kings viii. 22); standing and smiting the breast (Luke xviii. 13).

241. Peter and John. "We cannot but speak" (Acts iv. 20).

242. Ps. xxviii. 1; xxxi. 2, 3; lxxxix. 26; xciii. 1.

243. 1 Peter iii. 18.

BIBLE NOTES.

THE LEAVEN (Matt. xiii. 33, Luke xiii. 20, 21).

THE kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." This is the only parable spoken by our Lord which is recorded in identical words by the writers who have handed it down to us. It follows in both Gospels the parable of the mustard seed, and like it, portrays the increase of the kingdom of God; it declares its hidden, mysterious working, its influence on the mass with which it is brought into contact. Leaven, as is well known, is the agent of fermentation, and is used in the New Testament figuratively, and in this parable alone excepted, always in a bad sense. Some have questioned whether this ought to be an exception, maintaining that the Lord designed in this illustration to indicate the gradual corruption of the truth in the Church by false doctrine. Both interpretations have found advocates in every age, from the earliest time to the present; but the weight of reasoning leans to the conclusion that in this case our Lord is speaking of the diffusion, not the corruption of the Gospel, and that by the leaven we are to understand the "word of the kingdom."

This parable differs from that which immediately precedes it in the fact, that while that shows the increase of the kingdom of God in the world, this shows its increase in the individual hearts of men. The one shows the result of the planting of the kingdom of God in the world, while the other points out its working in the component parts that constitute the whole. The leaven is apparently of slight account, and yet it is at the same time mighty in operation; so the doctrine of the Cross, and of Him who died on it, was indeed of so little account in the minds of the sages amongst the Greeks and Romans, that to them it was foolishness, still in spite of their opposition it spread in their midst, leavening first one then another.

As the lump, without the leaven working through it, when baked would have been anything but pleasant to the taste, so we know what man generally is before the Spirit brings home to his heart the powerful influences to be found in God's Word, and works a change there which nothing else can do. Science cannot solve the doubts by which the mass of humanity is encircled; philosophy cannot unravel the truths which are made perfectly plain in the Gospel. As the leaven is something foreign from the meal with which it mingles and coalesces, altering the whole character of the lump with which it is brought into contact, so is the kingdom of heaven very different from, and quite alien to, the kingdoms

with which it is necessarily brought into collision. It is not a kingdom of this world—that is, it has not its origin in this world; so said Christ (John xviii. 36), and consequently there can be no sympathy between the world and this kingdom until the former is thoroughly impregnated with the latter. That such a state of things is to be expected we believe, for has not God's Word expressly said: "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. ii. 14)? The way, and the only way, in which this can be effected—for we must remember that God works by means—is that, as the parts constitute the whole, so each part must have the Gospel of Christ working in itself first, and then the blessings being experienced by each, will at last be experienced by all. The leaven was hidden in the meal, and its presence was not noticed till it began its work; so the word of the kingdom, sown by God's goodness, in his own way, in a man's heart, pervades it thoroughly, works an inward change there, and then that change shows itself by an altered exterior: men begin to see that something different to his old self is at work to cause such a change in all his habits and actions.

Though at first sight not apparent, yet there is a prophecy contained in the very words of this parable. We read that the leaven is mixed with the meal till "the whole is leavened." The mood and tense of the verb used in the Greek shows that the whole world *will* be leavened; that as the leaven worked its way through the various particles composing the lump, so will God's Word, the basis on which rests the kingdom of his truth, work its way first in men's hearts, and then and by their means through the world at large.

Is it not clear from all experience and observation, that the Word when received into the heart will not end its effectual workings there, till it has brought the whole man, his mind, his body, his soul—in fact, everything that makes up what we call the man—into obedience to it, cleansing him from his daily defilement with the world, and making him a fit associate for the saints in light?

The following comment on our Lord's words is worth recording, and with it we shall conclude this paper:—"The Gospel hath such a secret, invisible influence on the hearts of men, to change them and affect them, and all the actions that flow from them, that it is fitly resembled to leaven, so mixed thoroughly with the whole, that although it appeareth not in any part of it visibly, yet every part hath a tincture from it."